

# FACT SHEET



## **Ness Crude Oil, Inc. Site Ness City, Kansas**

**July 1998**

### **SITE UPDATE**

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Region 7 is currently addressing contamination at the Ness Crude Oil, Inc. site in Ness City, Kansas. The agency is dismantling petroleum tanks and removing their contents, in addition to draining and disposing of oil from two sludge pits on the site. Contaminated surface soil is also being excavated, due to petroleum materials that have leaked from the tanks over time.

### **BACKGROUND**

The Ness Crude, Inc. site is an abandoned oil recovery operation located approximately ½ mile north of Ness City, Kansas. The property was purchased by Ness Crude Oil, Inc. in 1984. Ness Crude collected tank bottom sludge from oil production leases in the area. The sludge was consolidated on the site in approximately 25 above-ground tanks until marketable oil could be recovered or extracted.

Ness Crude filed for bankruptcy in 1993. During bankruptcy proceedings, the site was not purchased, and therefore the site remains recorded as Ness Crude Oil, Inc.

In 1997, a neighboring landowner filed a complaint with the Kansas Corporation Commission (KCC). KCC then referred the site to the Kansas Department of Health and Environment (KDHE). In June 1997, KDHE and KCC visited the site and determined that approximately 84,000 gallons of sludge still remained in tanks on the site. Many of these tanks were in poor condition, leaking, and contaminating surface soil. In addition, the leaking oil was flowing into two pits on the site. The estimated amount of oil in the two pits is 42,000 gallons.

KDHE referred the site to EPA Region 7 in December 1997. EPA observed much surface soil contamination from sludge leaking from the tanks. Many of the tanks were rusting at the seams and valves. During periods of rain, the sludge in the two pits flows off the site. Run-off from rain allows these petroleum materials to discharge into a drainage ditch. The drainage ditch flows into an intermittent creek before it discharges into the North Fork of Walnut Creek.

## **SITE ACTIVITIES**

The EPA is currently removing petroleum from the tanks on-site. The majority of the tanks are in poor condition and are leaking petroleum materials. The soil surrounding these tanks has also been contaminated from the leaking petroleum. The agency is excavating the severely contaminated surface soil at this time. The oil sludge in the two pits on-site is also being properly addressed.

This action is authorized by the Federal Water Pollution Control Act (“Clean Water Act”) as amended by the Oil Pollution Act of 1990 (OPA). OPA allows for the removal or arrangements for the removal of oil-contaminated materials and debris to prevent the threat of a substantial discharge of oil into a waterway.

## **ADDITIONAL INFORMATION**

If you have questions about this fact sheet, or need additional information regarding this site, please contact:

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